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[To be continued.]

XL.—*Information respecting Botanical Travellers.*

*Mr. Schomburgk's recent Expedition in Guiana.*

[Continued from p. 266.]

THERE are contradictory accounts among the Indians of a species of a cat, which in size and spotting resembles the *Cheta* (*Felis jubata*). Its ground colour is yellowish-fawn, and the spots are of a uniform colour and full and complete. Such appeared the cat to me which I saw watching me as related above\*; and although I have doubted the evidence of my eyes, the existence of such a species has gained additional strength by the circumstance, that, on visiting the British Museum with the three Indians who accompanied me from Guiana to England, they took the *Cheta* to be a specimen of that species which is indigenous to Guiana, and identical with the one which annoyed us so much.

In the Supplement to Buffon's 'Histoire Naturelle,' tome iii. planche 38 †, the figure of a cat is given which agrees with the one which I saw at Curassawaka, and it would be remarkable if, after all

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I mention another species from the reports of the Indians, and which the Arawaks call *Waracabba Arowa* or Trumpeter Tiger\*. They are equal in size to the former, and are said to go in small packs of six or eight, following their prey as well by scent as by sight. The Indians describe them as very ferocious, and say they will attack man and all the larger quadrupeds which range through the forest. They shun human habitations, and are only to be met with in the thickest forest. They are called *Waracabba Arowa* from having a bluish breast, resembling that of the gold-breasted trumpeter (*Psophia crepitans*), otherwise they are described to be yellow and spotted; whether contiguous or ringed I could not ascertain.

The *Abouya Arawa* or Peccary Cat of the Arawaks is a powerful animal for its size. It measures about 4 feet in length, and the tail from 16 to 18 inches: its colour is a yellowish-brown, not near so yellow as that of the jaguar (*Felis onca*). The lower parts are white, and the forehead is marked by four or five bands, which run transversely from the eyes towards the muzzle. The spots on the back are formed in oblong stripes, running from the neck to the tail, and each having a spot in the middle. The two lateral bands extend to the fore limbs; the rest of the body is covered with irregular blotches, which in the vicinity of the neck and the breast assume the form of small spots. Its tail is much shorter in proportion than any of the other species; its head is large, the neck thick, with great strength in its fore quarters. It frequents the habitations of man, and commits great destruction among sheep and hogs. In case of necessity it does not despise poultry. I conceive this species to be the *Felis macrourus* of Prince Maximilian of Neuwied.

*The Labba Cat.*—As I have not myself seen that species, I add Mr. Vieth's account. "This species is about the size of a wild cat. The spots are larger in proportion than on the other species, and are on a light brown ground; indeed the blotches resemble those of the jaguar, and are more frequent on the legs. They are very destructive to poultry, and enter the fowl-houses without fear. I have stuffed several of them; one, which was brought by one of my huntsmen, was sticking all over full of the prickles of the porcupine, which animal I have no doubt it had been attacking."

*Labba* is the Arawak name for the spotted cavia, on which they prey as well as on other small animals. The subject which Mr.

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Vieth described to me appears identical with Wilson's *Felis Pardalis*.

There is a variety of that species which the Indians call the *Aguri* or *Aguti-cat*; it is of the same colour as the foregoing, but the spots are small, and very thickly spread over the whole body. They are somewhat larger than a domestic cat, and are equally destructive to the feathered stock as the former. They frequent the plantations, as the sugar-cane fields afford them always a safe retreat. They have received their name from the *Aguti* (*Dasyprocta Aguti*). It forms no doubt one of the varieties of *Felis pardalis*.

The following two spotted species are considerably smaller than the foregoing, and are named by colonists 'tiger cats.' The **RAT-TIGER** of the Arawak Indians is beautifully marked. The ground colour of the skin is of a fawn colour, marked with black oblong spots on the head and shoulder, and with circular patches, which surround spots of a redder colour along the back and sides; the thighs are surrounded with black bands, assuming a lighter tint inside: the tail is alternately ringed white and black. They are not so large as the former species, and vary from 2 feet to 2 feet 4 inches, of which the tail alone measures from 8 to 9 inches. I think it may be identified with Linnæus's *Felis tigrina*.

The second variety is less than a domestic cat, and has large spots on a bright yellow ground; its fore paws are remarkably strong in proportion to its size, and it frequents chiefly thick woods, where it preys upon birds.

I shall now give a short description of the spotless cats which inhabit Guiana, of which the first that engages our attention is the black cat (*Felis nigra*?) or tiger as it is called *par excellence* by the Brazilian of the Rio Negro. During our expedition in the interior of Guiana, we were not so fortunate as to fall in with a specimen of this cat; although we were told by the Indians that it existed in British Guiana, and frequently committed great ravages among the herds of wild cattle in the savannahs of the rivers Takutu and Branco, and was not unfrequent on the Upper Orinoco and the Rio Negro. Its geographical distribution extends therefore from the coast regions of Guiana beyond the equator. Mr. Vieth had been told by the Waccawais, that they had killed specimens from time to time above the great cataract of the Demerara river; and there can be no doubt of it, as those tribes who inhabit Guiana possess names for it. They are called **MAIPURI-TIGER**, either from their colour, which resembles that animal (*Tapir americanus*), and perhaps, and more likely, from their preying on the *Tapir*, as it is a common custom among the Arawaks,

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The Indian distinguishes two species of the Puma, the WAWULA or Deer Tiger and the SOASOARANNA. The latter appears to be more restricted to the open savannahs of the Orinoco, the former frequents as well the coast regions as the savannahs. I have recognised in the two specimens which the Museum of the Zoological Society possesses, the Puma of the Orinoco; and although they are generally not known in British Guiana, I have seen a skin of one which had been killed above 40 miles up the Demerara river. The head seemed to be small in proportion to its size, the body was long, and the fore feet very stout; its tail, as far as I can remember, more than half the length of the body, and ending in a tuft of black hair.

I am enabled to give a more detailed account of the second species, the WAWULA AROWA of the Arawaks, or Deer Tiger of the colonists. In colour they are of a reddish-brown which lightens on the outside of the limbs, and assumes a white colour on the belly. Of a similar colour is the breast, and the reddish-brown which is the prevailing colour of the body is of a lighter tint at the muzzle and chin. It is covered with thick fur, which relates likewise to the tail, which, as in the Puma of the Orinoco, is black on the tips. The eyes are of a brown colour. The head is small; higher in proportion than any of the spotted kinds, strongly built before and light behind. Its proportion will become apparent from the following

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measurement of a subject which was killed at the savannahs of the Rio Branco, and which is now in my possession. It stood behind 2 feet, and before 1 foot 10 inches; and its whole length from the nose to the tip of the tail was 6 feet 2 inches.

	ft.	in.
Length from back of skull bone to insertion of tail . . . . .	3	1
Length of tail . . . . .	2	4
Length from point of shoulder to malleolus of fore foot ..	1	5
Girth of fore leg below point of shoulder . . . . .	0	8½
Girth of fore leg immediately below the knee . . . . .	0	5½
Length of the knee joint to malleolus. . . . .	0	10
Length of the sole of the hind foot. . . . .	0	4
Breadth of ditto . . . . .	0	4
Girth of the middle of the belly . . . . .	2	2
Girth of the body near the shoulder . . . . .	1	10
Length from tip of snout to posterior extremity of the skull	0	9
Space between the base of the ears. . . . .	0	4
Length of the ears . . . . .	0	3½
Space from eye to nostril. . . . .	0	2½
Hind leg from hip joint to sole of foot . . . . .	1	9
Hind leg from knee joint to ditto . . . . .	0	5
Length of fore claws } middle claw . . . . .	0	0⅞
Length of hind claws }		

It is very destructive to the cattle farms, and it is so powerful an animal, that I have been told by an eye witness, that it killed a mule and dragged it across a trench to the opposite side, although the trench was not quite full of water, and the Puma had to drag it a few feet up hill, after it landed with its prey on the other side. My informant, who had watched its proceedings, had meanwhile sent for his gun, and shot him while attempting to pull the mule into the wood. They seem to be particularly partial to dogs, and a great number of those which are kept by the settlers for the purpose of hunting, are killed and eaten by them. They follow in the woods the herds of Peccaries, and watch their motion in order to seize upon the stragglers, being well aware that if they attacked the flock, they would be overpowered and torn to pieces. They hunt as well by day as in the night, and feed also on deer and the smaller domestic animals. They give birth to two young ones, seldom three, which have spots of a darker hue, more or less visible, according as the lights fall upon them, and which I have been told they lose after the first year.

Cuvier doubts that the cats just described form two different spe-

measurement of a subject which was killed at the savannahs of the Rio Branco, and which is now in my possession. It stood behind 2 feet, and before 1 foot 10 inches; and its whole length from the nose to the tip of the tail was 6 feet 2 inches.

	ft.	in.
Length from back of skull bone to insertion of tail . . . . .	3	1
Length of tail . . . . .	2	4
Length from point of shoulder to malleolus of fore foot ..	1	5
Girth of fore leg below point of shoulder . . . . .	0	8½
Girth of fore leg immediately below the knee . . . . .	0	5½
Length of the knee joint to malleolus. . . . .	0	10
Length of the sole of the hind foot. . . . .	0	4
Breadth of ditto . . . . .	0	4
Girth of the middle of the belly . . . . .	2	2
Girth of the body near the shoulder . . . . .	1	10
Length from tip of snout to posterior extremity of the skull	0	9
Space between the base of the ears. . . . .	0	4
Length of the ears . . . . .	0	3½
Space from eye to nostril. . . . .	0	2½
Hind leg from hip joint to sole of foot . . . . .	1	9
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cies. I do not venture to combat his opinion, as I saw only a skin of the Puma of the Orinoco, which was similar to the specimens at the Museum of the Zoological Society, and agrees with Mr. Bennett's description, while the second, and of which I possess a specimen, resembles Wilson's figure of the *Felis concolor*.

The WILLIBISSIRI AROWA is likewise unspotted cat, and is exceedingly rare in Guiana. It is of a light gray colour, approaching to white on the belly; its snout is of a reddish-brown and has a white spot on the breast; its tail is of the same thickness throughout, and it does not possess the black tip of the Puma. It is about 2 feet 6 inches long, and stands high in proportion to its size, strongly built before with stout neck and small head. Mr. Vieth gave me the following note on this cat: "I have had two of these animals; one was killed by a negro at Mr. Patterson's at the Demerara river, while in the act of killing a turkey, the other in the same neighbourhood while swimming across a river. I had them both at the same time, and showed them to Mr. Brandes, famed as a great huntsman, and who has killed of almost every species of animal in our colony, but who appeared to be unacquainted with that species of cat. However the Waccawai Indians who inhabit the upper Demerara river, and some of whom I had in my employ, did not seem to think it a rarity, and told me they had seen and killed them from time to time." It has received its Arawak name *Willibissiri Arowa*, from the smallest species of deer which Guiana possesses, which this cat resembles in colour and on which it preys. I conceive it to be the *Felis jaguarondi*, or rather that variety which Dr. Traill describes as *Felis unicolor*.

The HACCA AROWA is the last species of cat that I have met with or heard of during my expeditions in Guiana. It resembles the preceding in size and form, but differs in colour; the adults being of a deep shining black, the belly dark mouse, with a tawny-coloured spot over each eye: the tail is without rings. Although not very common in Guiana, they are by no means rare, and the Indians use the skins for manufacturing caps, shot pouches, &c. They prey upon small animals, as Pacas, Agutis, and are also destructive to the feathered game. It appears to agree with Temminck's variety of the *Felis jaguarondi*, which he saw in the Paris Museum.

From the above description it will be observed, that eight spotted, and five spotless cats are named, all of which the Indian distinguishes by different names; but while the naturalist would hesitate to adopt his distinctions as specific, and considers the greater number mere varieties, we must confess that we know but little how far their



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structure diverges, and might warrant us to adopt them, in addition to the difference in spotting and colouring, as specific characters. I have had but little opportunity to extend my investigations to anything further than to the observations which a skin, sometimes mutilated, afforded; but it is evident that Guiana possesses two very distinct forms, of which the Jaguar (*Felis onca*) and the Puma (*Felis concolor*) offer the typical forms. The jaguar is the strongest, and most powerful of the *Felinæ*, and to what astonishing size it reaches, may be concluded from the circumstance, that Mr. Vieth found during our last expedition, on a savannah on the banks of the river Padauri, a tributary to the Rio Negro, a skeleton of a tiger which measured nine feet. It had been much mutilated by the vultures, but Mr. Vieth carried the skull, which was perfect, and which is now among my collections. The spotted kinds all bear a striking resemblance to each other: their heads are broad, the fore quarters remarkably strong and full of muscles; the chest broad, and their tails shorter in proportion than those of the spotless cats. Not less remarkable is the likeness of the unspotted species; their heads are small, the neck nearly the same thickness, the fore legs very strong and powerful, the hind legs taller in proportion, and the tail long, furry, and brush-like. These two forms are evident to every common observer, but it will want more knowledge of their anatomical structure to form the subordinate sections. In their habits they are all voracious, and prey upon animals much larger than themselves. They hunt chiefly by night, but when pressed by hunger destroy and carry away their prey in the open day. The larger species of the spotted kind are all excellent swimmers, and cross over rivers, or visit the islands where the Capybaras are generally found, and which seldom escape the fatal bound. Although there are several instances, yet comparatively speaking they seldom attack man; but they do not seem to fear him, as they enter the huts of Indians, and carry away their dogs, while they leave their owners undisturbed in their hammocks. Their claws are the chief instruments of attack and defence, and they are for that purpose strongly hooked, and capable of being retracted whilst not in use. Their canine teeth are strong, two in each jaw, cutting teeth small, and grinders shaped like an arrow-head.

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